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CHRISTIAN WORK IN THE ARMY

PRIOR TO THE

ORGANIZATION

OF THE

United States Christian Commission.

THE WORK

OF THE

ARMY COMMITTEE

OF THE

NEW YORK

Young Men's Christian Association,

WHICH LED TO THE ORGANIZATION OF THE

UNITED STATES CHRISTIAN COMMISSION:

A PAPER READ BEFORE THE ASSOCIATION AT THE MONTHLY MEETING, 18TH DECEMBER, 1865,

AT THE REQUEST OF THE

BOARD OF DIRECTORS,

BY

CEPHAS BRAINERD.

New York:
JOHN MEDOLE, PRINTER, 4 THAMES STREET.
1866.

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New York Young Men's Christian Association,
No. 161 Fifth Avenue,
November 27, 1865.

Cephas Brainerd, Esq.,

Dear Sir—At a regular meeting of the Board of Directors of this Association, held on the evening of the 25th inst., the following Resolutions were unanimously adopted:

Whereas, Mr. George H. Stuart, Chairman of the Christian Commission, has requested information in relation to the religious work performed among the Soldiers prior to its organization; therefore,

Resolved, That Cephas Brainerd, Esq., formerly Chairman of the Army Committee of the Association, be and he hereby is requested to prepare a statement of the services rendered by Committees of this Association, which led to the organization of the Commission.

Resolved, That Mr. Brainerd be and he hereby is requested to present the result of his investigations respecting the early army work of the Association, in the form of an essay, to be read at the monthly meeting in December.

Very truly yours,

L. BOLTON BANGS,
Recording Secretary.

The cause of the preparation of the following statement appears in the note which is given above. The writer, in preparing it, has had access to the letters and papers pertaining to the Army Committee in the hands of the gentlemen who composed it, and those preserved by the Association; to manuscript journals and memoranda of those engaged in the work; to written statements since prepared by them upon recollection; to the various advertisements, notices, editorial comments, reports and letters which appeared in the public press; and to the papers remaining in his hands, as Secretary of the Special Convention at which the Christian Commission was formed.

48 Pine Street,
18*th Dec.*, '65.

C. B.

STATEMENT.

Mr. President, Brethren:

For many privileges and blessings, for opportunities for self-culture, for labor, and for effort in the cause of the Master, through a period of more than twelve years, I still owe this Association my most hearty thanks, my most earnest efforts, and my most fervent prayers. But no duty to which I have been called, in this somewhat long connection, has been to me a source of so much pleasure, and even pride, as that which is now, under the peremptory invitation of the Board of Directors, sought to be performed.

Would that it were in my power to deck the story of the early work of our loved Association, among the soldiers of the Union Army, with the charms of scholarship and rhetoric; but there remains this satisfaction, that in its plain and unadorned details, when duly appreciated, there may be found a fascination beyond the proudest story of chivalry or romance. Perhaps it is to be feared that, at this late day, the importance of this early work, anterior to the organization of the Christian Commission, can not be fully apprehended. We may find it difficult to carry our minds back over the history of the last four years and picture to ourselves, with the vividness of awful reality, the situation of the nation, and the feelings of the people, in the first half year of the war. We have now before us the vision of a lasting peace: a united people, the most powerful on the globe, dwelling in a vast and fruitful land, under a system of constitutional law the most complete and wise ever devised by the wit of man, from whom there daily

ascends the song of happy industry and devout praise, freed from the discordant moans of the unpaid slave.

Still sounding in our ears, is the martial tramp and music of more than one million of victorious soldiers on their homeward march, and their gleaming bayonets and waving standards are just fading from our view. Those grand charities of the war, the Christian and Sanitary Commissions, without parallel in the history of philanthropic endeavor, the annual almoners of millions of dollars, are now submitting the histories of their sublime labors, and the statistical details of the generosity of a noble and patriotic people.

Hence, in the contrast, small beginnings and early, circumscribed efforts appear poor, indeed. But to-night we must strive to see the great rebellion in its earlier developments; to recall the doubt and bewilderment of the whole people; the fears respecting the strength of our form of government, and the wide-spread skepticism, at home and abroad, as to the ability of a nation so constituted to withstand successfully the shock of such a civil contest; the body of the positively disloyal at the North, and their constant croaking; the proud demeanor and bold, defiant tones of organized rebels and traitors; the utter unpreparedness of the nation for a contest of arms, possessing neither the munitions of war, nor money, its sinews; and the entire ignorance of the whole population, either in theory or in fact, of the perils, duties, sacrifices, and dangers involved in a state of national belligerency.

The air was filled with rumors, the most frightful and contradictory, but all facts to an eager and agitated population; yet with hurried good-byes, ill defined but patriotic notions, and no preparation, the young men of the land were crowding into camps to take on the garb and confront the dangers of military life.

At a period when the condition of our country was most strange and inexplicable, a monthly meeting of this Association was held in the lecture-room of Dr. Asa D. Smith's church, corner of Fourteenth Street and Second Avenue, at which P. Harwood Vernon, Esq., then the head of our organization, presided. It was one of our smallest meetings; indeed, we never saw darker days than those then passing. In peculiar

contrast with the condition of things, and forcibly illustrating their contradictory character, the stated paper, read by Mr. Frank W. Ballard, treated of "The Huguenot Settlers of New York and Vicinity." Perhaps the lesson there taught of the sufferings and sacrifices of those noble men for conscience' sake, and their unfaltering perseverance in the right course, was a fit one for us all to hear and ponder afresh.

Anterior to this meeting, and on the 21st of May, 1861, some members of the new Board of Directors held an informal meeting in the study of Rev. Stephen H. Tyng, Jr., when the subject of army work for the Association was considered and discussed; and within a day or two thereafter Messrs. Vernon and Tyng made the first visit to the soldiers as representatives of the Association; they were of the Troy regiment then stationed in Canal Street. Immediately thereafter followed our regular meeting, when the situation of the volunteers in the camps about the city, their necessities, the lack of chaplains and religious instructors, the need of small and portable books and tracts adapted to the wants of a soldier's life, were fully discussed; and the question was then agitated, What should the Association do?

And there, with most unpromising surroundings, the whole of the ideas, since more fully developed and popularized by the United States Christian Commission, first received distinct and emphatic utterance, and were presented in tangible and organic form.

To the lasting fame of the New York Young Men's Christian Association, let it be said, and repeated, that, then and there, in its monthly meeting, on the 27th of May, 1861, the United States Christian Commission, in the general, and also in the more detailed, plans of its operations, had its origin.

By a resolution then adopted, having the threefold elements of preaching services, individual religious visitations, and publications for soldiers' use, "The Army Committee of the New York Young Men's Christian Association" was established, and Gilead B. Nash, Chairman, Frank W. Ballard, Stephen H. Tyng, Jr., and the President, Mr. Vernon, were named as its members. This, be it remembered, was the *first* recognition of he army as a field for evangelical labor and effort.

The committee remained, as above constituted, until the August following, when Vincent Colyer, Noble Heath, Jr., and Edward Self were added to it, they having, for many weeks previous, been most actively engaged in the work—Mr. Colyer's connection with the committee dating from June 29th, though he had, since the departure of the first regiment, in April, been engaged singly in a similar work.

The first meeting of the committee was held at 2½ Wall Street (Mr. Ballard's office), on the 28th of May, and from that time onward daily meetings were held, with great regularity, until the organization of the Commission; that office being the head-quarters in New York, and Mr. Ballard constantly in attendance, as the representative of the committee, and generally the manager of its affairs.

It may not be uninteresting to note, here, the date of the organization of other societies. The Ladies' Association for Relief, &c., for the purpose of "providing against the time of wounds and sickness in the army," was formed 25th April, 1861; and the Sanitary Commission, which grew directly out of it, was established under the patronage and direct sanction of the Government, for substantially the same purposes, subsequent to the 18th June, 1861.

Let us now notice, somewhat in detail, a few of the facts which enter into the history of the original "Army Committee."

I. A PLAN OF OPERATIONS was at once decided upon, which, with but a single addition hereafter to be noticed, was adhered to throughout. That plan embraced the publication of a collection of familiar hymns, scripture readings, and prayers fitted for the soldier's use, of which, at that time, none existed; the establishment of devotional meetings in the camps of the soldiers in the neighborhood, on Sundays and week-day evenings; the visitation of all regiments as they passed through the city, supplying them with religious reading, and the holding of religious services, if their stay allowed time and opportunity; the organization of a working Christian force in every regiment, by which it was hoped to strengthen followers of Christ in the army to resist the temptations which would

thickly crowd about them; and the aid and support of chaplains in their arduous tasks. A correspondence with chaplains and others, in and out of the army, was devised, as one means of accomplishing this result.

II. The first active work undertaken was the holding MEETINGS AMONG THE SOLDIERS.

The city was then surrounded with camps, and filled with soldiers' barracks; and there were few chaplains to conduct services; out of twenty-two camps visited by Mr. George P. Rowan, and mentioned in one of his reports, only four had chaplains attached to them—and one of these had, for all religious purposes, better have been elsewhere. This matter was placed in the hands of a subordinate committee, of which Mr. Thomas G. Baker was chairman, and on the following Sabbath a large number of meetings were held. It soon became apparent, however, that some one must be employed to arrange for these services, as the task at once became burdensome, indeed; accordingly, on June 4th, the services of the Rev. L. C. Lockwood were secured for this purpose, and he was thus employed fourteen weeks and one-half.

From that time, the visitation of the local regiments and those *in transitu* was carried on together, Mr. Edward Colgate being chairman of the special committee charged with the interests of this latter class of soldiers, and also co-operating heartily in the general work of the Committee on Devotional Meetings.

In all cases where there were chaplains attached to regiments, and but very few had then been appointed, the meetings were held under arrangements made with them; but in most instances these services were solely under the control of members of our Association, though always held with the consent and approbation of the officer in command of the camps or barracks.

All the barracks in the city were visited frequently, including the Park, Palace Garden, Battery, and others less known; and in the various regiments that were successively located at Riker's Island, the South Brother, Elm Park, Saltersville, N. J., Willett's Point, New Dorp, Camp Scott, East New York, Yonkers, Scarsdale, and other places within a radius of thirty

miles around the city, services were held with as much regularity as the circumstances of the forming state of these organizations would allow.

During the six months, or rather less, to which the statement now submitted is confined, more than three hundred of these meetings were held, and with the happiest results; the soldiers were not the only persons benefited—our own representatives received back in their own hearts an hundredfold the good they conferred. They were gladly received by both officers and men, and scarcely an instance can now be recalled when they were in any way unkindly treated.

Do you ask the character of these services? They were earnest and spiritual; and how could they be otherwise? The men who listened had just left home and loving friends to risk the deadly chances of war; those who actively engaged in the exercises were of the same class—for every effort was made to bring out the Christian element in the camps—or else volunteers from the Association, or among its friends, who had entered upon the duty, realizing the awful crisis in which we all then stood. Would that I could read to you here from the letters which have passed under my eyes describing the ardor of religious and devotional feelings with which these services were conducted, or convey to each of you a sense of the burdens which oppressed my own heart upon occasions when I was permitted to take part in these solemn transactions. Imagine yourselves in the same situation, with these men, whom you would never meet again on earth, on their way to battle and to death, before you, and if your heart is in the least devoted to the Saviour, you can picture, better than my words can do it, the deeply interesting character of these three hundred Christian services.

On some Sabbath days twenty appointments were made and promptly filled; but that you may not have an exaggerated opinion respecting them, I give you here the assignment of fourteen services for one day—4th August—as an average Sabbath list for the season. You will observe they cover a wide field, and must have furnished employment for a large number of men, as they made these visits in companies of three or four:

10½ A.M., Palace Garden. Col. John Cochrane's U. S. Chasseurs.

10½ A.M., Willett's Point, Long Island. Part of Col. Cochrane's regiment. (Or as near 10½ as possible.)

10½ A.M., Elm Park, Bloomingdale Road and 87th Street. Lincoln Cavalry, (German.) And probably an afternoon meeting.

10½ A.M., Elm Park. N. Y. Mounted Rifles. And probably an afternoon meeting.

10 A.M., Quarantine Barracks, Staten Island. President's Life Guard.

11 A.M., Quarantine Barracks, Staten Island. Clinton Rifles.

2 P.M., Camp Scott, Staten Island. 2d Fire Zouaves, Col. James Fairman.

3 P.M., Camp Scott, Staten Island. Col. Graham's 5th Regiment.

4 P.M., Fort Hamilton, Long Island. Col. Perry's Continental Guard.

4½ P.M., Palace Garden, 14th Street, N. Y. U. S. Chasseurs.

3 P.M., Scott Rifles, at Silver Lake, Staten Island. 1¼ miles from Quarantine.

3 P.M., Disbrow's Riding Academy, 5th Avenue and 39th Street. N. Y. Mounted Rifles.

1 P.M., East New York. Col. Moore's Washington Greys.

10⅓ A.M., Broadway Park, Bloomingdale Road, about 90th Street.

III. The Committee sought, by PUBLIC MEETINGS, to arouse the people to an appreciation of the magnitude and gravity of the duty with which they were charged. Three only can be here specially mentioned. The first occurred ten days after the appointment of the Committee, at Cooper Institute, 6th June, 1861; it was very large and most enthusiastic; it was presided over by William E. Dodge, Esq.—one justly renowned in the history of Christian philanthropy—who stated with great clearness and precision the scheme and purpose of the Association in the work now assumed, and its overshadowing importance. Drs. Tyng, Hague, Hitchcock and Adams, and Simeon B. Chit-

tenden, Esq., lent to the new movement the great weight of their names and characters, by an active participation in the exercises. The children of the Asylum for the Blind, contributed materially by their exquisite rendering of patriotic and devotional songs to deepen the interest and fix the purposes of the people. Under a resolution then adopted, Messrs. W. E. Dodge, Wilson G. Hunt, Benjamin F. Manierre, Austin Abbott, Benjamin W. Bonney and Alexander W. Bradford, were appointed a Committee to aid in the collection of the necessary funds; and as the letters from these gentlemen accepting the appointment have been in my hands, I take it upon me to say that the leading Christian men of New York were not behind any, in fully appreciating the importance of the movement. But a few days thereafter, a carefully prepared and most eloquent appeal was issued by this Committee, which obtained a prominent place in all our papers, and was largely circulated through the mails, and contributed materially to the success of this new enterprise.

Again, July 28th, Sunday evening, one week after the battle of "Bull Run," a very large and most interesting meeting was held in Dr. Hague's Church, when reports from our delegates at Washington were presented, a candid and complete statement of the whole service thus far rendered by the Committee was presented by Mr. Vernon, and addresses were made by Drs. Hague and Tyng, and the Chaplain of the 71st N. Y. S. M., Rev. S. E. Pierce, bearing directly upon the wants of the Association, in the efforts then being made by the Committee, for the relief of the wounded and dying soldiers. One benefit derived from this meeting was at once felt by the delegates at Washington, in the increased quantity of supplies sent forward.

But one of the most interesting and profitable of all the general services, was that arranged for the afternoon of "Fast Day," the last Thursday of September, at Calvary Baptist Church, "which was rendered by its large attendance, and the solemn character it assumed, one of the memorable meetings of that historic day."

Would that time allowed me to describe with fullness the deeply interesting character of these and many kindred gatherings, together with the "Union Prayer Meetings for the

Soldiers," called by this Committee, or by the Association in its behalf, to all of which the pastors and members of the churches responded in the most hearty manner, displaying a real interest in the soldier, and a true faith in God.

IV. Another service rendered was the PUBLICATION of "The Soldier's Hymn Book," and its large CIRCULATION, together with the issues of other organizations. Our "book" was issued, 16th June, 1861, and to those curious in such matters let me say, that it was mainly compiled by Rev. J. H. Burtis, the prefatory note written by Mr. Vernon, and the address of the Committee, on the last page of the cover, by Mr. Ballard. This was the first and best publication of its kind for use in the army. Indeed, so far as I have been able to learn, nothing of this character of importance had then been issued from any quarter. A compilation from the Book of Common Prayer, though larger and less portable, was approved by the Bishop, on the 13th of June, and could not probably have been issued till some days later.

I quote from our "Tenth Annual Report" a sketch of that successful book—"The Soldier's Hymn Book:"

"It at once attained great popularity, and, having been stereotyped, reached in rapidly succeeding editions a circulation of over one hundred thousand copies. Of this large number seventy thousand copies were published and distributed by our Committee in the course of their operations, and the remainder were furnished to the Young Men's Christian Associations of Philadelphia, Brooklyn and Chicago, and to the American Sunday School Union, for distribution in their respective fields of labor. These Associations supplied the funds for the several editions used by them, and under their auspices this useful hymn book has been permitted to do its work in the camp, in the hospital, and on the march, wherever a medium of distributing it was at hand. To those who have not seen the book, a few words respecting it may not be uninteresting.

"The 'Soldier's Hymn Book' is of vest-pocket size, contains seventy-seven hymns and songs, of which sixty-one are devotional, and the others temperance and patriotic; with a preface explaining its purpose, and a card upon the last cover soliciting communications from the soldiers as to any deprivations or inconveniences such as it is in the power of the Association to mitigate or diminish. The front cover is ornamented with a cut of the national ensign, with the motto beneath it, taken from one of the hymns:

"'For right is right, since God is God,
And right the day must win;
To doubt would be disloyalty,
To falter would be sin.'"

It would now be scarcely possible to compute the number of soldiers' books and tracts, which subsequently bore upon their front this single stanza, and the people everywhere adopted it as expressing, with popular conciseness and beauty, the ground of their faith that the final victory would be for the national cause.

But the Committee did not confine their efforts to the circulation of the "Hymn Book." They employed every thing fit for their purpose that could be obtained. The first contribution to their stock, in this department, was made by Mr. Anson D. F. Randolph, an original member and present friend of the Association. The various religious publication societies of New York, Philadelphia, and Boston, the American Tract Societies of New York and Boston, the Evangelical Knowledge Society, the American and Foreign Bible Society, the Society for Promoting Religion and Learning in N. Y., as well as many publishing houses, and individuals, made most generous donations. A large quantity of Douay Testaments were also obtained, in consequence of repeated calls for them by soldiers, and carefully distributed wherever those were found who desired them. And in all not less than $6,000 worth of religious reading matter was received by donation, and most thoroughly and judiciously distributed.

The regiments forming in or passing through the city, were visited and supplied; and packages sent to all quarters—Washington, Alexandria, Fortress Monroe, Cairo, Camp "Jo. Holt," &c., and especially I would mention the supply of the whole "Kentucky Brigade," commanded by General Robert Anderson, it having for Chaplain the Rev. Mr. Chidlaw, so famous as a Sunday School Missionary.

It is safe to assume, that when this Committee closed its labors, a copy of the "Soldier's Hymn Book" had, either by the representatives of the Association, or by other hands, been given to every third man in the Union army, more than one hundred thousand having been published.

V. The Committee soon found that there were many persons holding office and drawing pay as chaplains, who were utterly unfit for the positions they filled, and the SECRETARY OF WAR having issued an order bearing upon that matter, he WAS

MEMORIALIZED, July 1st, upon the subject. In this paper, the facts touching the character and fitness—or rather unfitness—of some of these harpies, were plainly set forth.

This drew from the Secretary, July 6th, a most emphatic condemnation of incompetent and unworthy chaplains, and an expression of the "sincere pleasure" which would be experienced by that officer in the dismissal of such men. He then observes:

"I am decidedly of the opinion that it would be far better for the volunteer regiments to be without chaplains, than to be demoralized by unworthy men, who, solely from motives of gain, desecrate the sacred character of the position they assume. Such appointments are in direct contravention of the express recommendation of the Department, and are, at the same time, a deliberate outrage upon the religious sentiment of the age."

The memorial and reply were largely circulated through the public press, became the subject of much approving comment, and, doubtless, contributed greatly to break up a practice which some dishonest and unworthy men had already introduced, of appointing political favorites and suspended clergymen to the responsible post of regimental chaplain.

VI. On the morning of Monday, 21st July, the people of the North were informed by the telegraph, which we have now come to appreciate, that our troops had, the day preceding, won a great victory at Bull Run, and that "the back bone of rebellion was broken." In the afternoon of that day we learned that the human mind had made such advances, that a lie could be perpetrated by the use of a moderate supply of lightning, and that instead of a great victory, our troops were flying, panic stricken, upon Washington, and it was added, by way of consolation, that the invincible Beauregard was in pursuit, at the head of the mythical "Black Horse Cavalry." A panic seemed to seize all classes, and people stared at each other not knowing what to do, or even what to propose.

On that afternoon, Mr. Colyer proposed the MISSION TO WASHINGTON, and one day later, 23d June, in the afternoon, Messrs. Ballard and Colyer started on that service as the representatives of our Army Committee. They reached Washington on the morning of the 24th, immediately obtained admittance to the hospitals, and from that time on, this Associa-

tion may be said to have had its representatives in that city, till the organization of the "Christian Commission," for Mr. Colyer's absences were infrequent and brief, and even on those occasions some one acted for him.

Our delegates found every thing in confusion, but "an abundance to do." One thus writes:

"We found the men delighted to see us. They said we were the first visitors they had seen. All welcomed us heartily, and thanked us when we said we would call again. It was touching to have each suffering soldier point out to us some wounded companions, and request our attention to them."

The other writes:

"The soldiers shed tears of delight as we move among them with our offers of courtesy and kindness. Their eyes glisten while we are writing for them to 'anxious loved ones at home;' and for myself, I can truly say I never had a better day's work than that of yesterday, our first day here. We did not leave off till 7 P.M., and are going at it again right away."

Messers. Vernon, Noble Heath, Jr., Rev. F. S. Rising, and M. S. Winchell, M.D., now deceased, also engaged in this work, and for more than a month from this date there were always two, and sometimes more, from our Association thus employed in the new field.

Many hearts at home were made glad by letters from sick and wounded soldiers, which, but for our delegates, would not have been written.

Let it be mentioned here, to the honor of a noble body of men, that a generous gift at this time of $300 from the "Artists' Patriotic Fund," tended greatly to the early success of this mission.

Such a work as this must abound in incident, but your patience would more that tire were I to attempt to detail the tithe of those which now exist, either in print, or in the mass of letters and journals of the delegates, not to mention even those stored in the memory, which can always be obtained for the asking. I quote one from a paper furnished me by Mr. Heath:

"We found a fine, noble looking man, who lay upon his back in one of the brigade hospitals, at Alexandria; very little conversation could be had with him, as he seemed extremely reticent, but happy to have seen us and profited by our interview. Two days after when we called, we saw him lying dead before us, and learned that he had died of a wound in the back, which was

entirely unknown till after his decease, as he was too proud to acknowledge such a wound, even for the purpose of prolonging life."

I now quote from one of Mr. Colyer's letters:

"A soldier of a Maine regiment—Mr. Judkins—lay dangerously wounded. I noticed that he had been growing weaker and paler. He was too weak to converse. I offered him some books; he selected one with the title 'Come to Jesus' prettily printed on the cover, and desired me to place it before him where he could keep his eyes upon it. I did so, putting it on the window sill opposite him. He died that night; but the watcher said he died with his eyes fixed on the title of that little book."

An advertisement was inserted in the daily papers, as our deputation started for Washington, announcing the fact and the purposes of the mission, and that the delegates would transmit information to friends of soldiers in response to letters sent to the office of the Committee in New York, "specifying the regiment, company, and other necessary particulars, respecting the subject of inquiry." A large number of such letters were received by the Committee, and forwarded to the delegates, many of them containing communications addressed to the "lost ones." All such cases were, as far as possible, carefully sought out, and letters delivered, or responses to inquiries dispatched, to the great comfort of both soldier and friends at home. The men were delighted with the services thus rendered to them, and one member of the 11th N. Y. V., "Fire Zouaves," thus visited, after ascertaining that our delegates were representatives of the Young Men's Christian Association of New York, was overjoyed at the attention, and declared with great solemnity of tone, and in the elegant language of his "craft," that ever after "he should run with that machine."

During the first four days of this Mission, no clergyman, or even chaplain, was seen by our delegates in any hospital visited by them. Indeed, it was not then generally understood that common soldiers had souls. If they had ever possessed them, the prevalent opinion, especially among subordinate army officers, appeared to be, that the individual parted with that indispensable element in the composition of a complete man, upon taking the oath of a private in the ranks. And it is due to this Committee to say that their early efforts aided materially in working the mighty change which came over our people in this regard.

In fulfillment of this mission, our Committee at once commenced the distribution of hospital stores, and comforts of all sorts, as the necessity of the soldiers and their own supplies warranted, embracing even articles to replace those lost on the retreat; and most generous contributions, by residents of this city, Brooklyn, and other more remote places, were promptly made, to the estimated value of $12,000; and the "Jamaica wagon" of the representative of our Association and of the Army Committee, with its load of reading and stores, became as well known in the city of Washington and the camps in the vicinity, as were subsequently the wagons of the Christian Commission, of which it was the prototype. An office was early secured in Washington, 251 F street, which was regularly advertised, was the depot for all our supplies, and was well known to all who then had any sympathy with the work.

Nor was the service without official recognition of the most exalted and honorable character. Two wealthy Christian ladies, then in Washington, were early interested in our work in that city, and on August 17th, secured, at their own charges, a chaplain for one of the hospitals, requesting Mr. Colyer, our representative, to select a fit clergyman whom they could thus employ. Subsequently, being on terms of intimacy with General Scott, at that time the commander of all our armies, they rehearsed to him the story of our army work, and requested a pass to be used in its prosecution; he, unsolicited by any representing our agency, caused his aide to inquire of Mr. Colyer how full it would be desirable to make such a pass. Mr. Colyer replied—having then in view the Christian Commission—for the whole army, and thereupon the Adjutant-General sent the following, signed by the General himself:

"Headquarters of the Army,
"Washington, *Aug.* 30, 1861.

"Mr. Vincent Colyer, of the Army Committee of the New York Young Men's Christian Association, in the prosecution of his benevolent labors in the camps and hospitals, will be permitted to pass through the United States lines at all times, and is commended to the courtesy of the troops.

"By Command. (Signed) WINFIELD SCOTT.

"H. Van Rensselaer, Col. and Aide-de-Camp."

When this was countersigned by Gen. McClellan, for Mr. Colyer's use in his mission to North Carolina, he restricted

it to an unlimited pass *within* our army lines, not deeming it wise to longer allow such extended liberty as that given by Gen. Scott. In a long career of high honor and most distinguished usefulness, that veteran soldier and diplomatist has not performed a single act which better shows a heart noble and generous, than that I have now detailed.

Never before, in all history, had a Christian organization been seen in military hospitals and camps, preaching the Word, nursing the sick and wounded, feeding the hungry, and clothing those made naked by the chances of war. True, hospital nursing had its fascinations, and its colors of fancy, for it was blended in every mind with the gentle mission of Florence Nightingale to the fever-cots of the neglected soldiers at Scutari; but the blending of all these services under one Christian organization, marks an epoch in the Master's work. We are now brought to that point in the career of our original "Army Committee," where it embraced, in its scheme of labor and of usefulness, the whole plan of the subsequent work of the great Commission, as it visited camp after camp, and hospital after hospital, a very angel of mercy, owned and blessed of the Saviour, bearing in one hand meat for the body that perisheth, and in the other, "the bread of life."

But I have not known any more pleasant reminder of this early work of our brethren than occurred a few months since. A leading member of the New Orleans Association, on a visit to our city, was presented to a member of the Army Committee, when he said, "In July, 1861, I was very sick in one of the Alexandria hospitals, of typhoid fever, being then a member of a regiment from this State; and was most carefully watched and kindly addressed by a delegate from your Association for many days, but his name has escaped me." He was asked to describe the delegate, and out of the disordered fancies of the fever-patient, and from its confused and fading visions, he drew a faithful portrait of P. Harwood Vernon. Surely there are others than the members of this Association who retain a vivid recollection of the services now recalled to mind.

VII. During the whole period of the Committee's work a most extensive CORRESPONDENCE was conducted by Mr. Tyng

on its behalf, (see circular under which this correspondence was instituted, Appendix B,) with something over two hundred chaplains. This had a fourfold object: the supply of the soldiers with religious reading; the ascertainment of the needs of the chaplains, that they might be met, if possible; their encouragement in the performance of the perplexing duties devolved upon them, by expressions of sympathy and offers of assistance; and the accumulation of information to be employed in urging the formation of the general society, and developing the plans for its future operations.

On the 27th August, after the determination had become fixed to call for united action on the part of all the Associations of the loyal States, Mr. Colyer, as the resident representative of the Army Committee, issued a circular letter from the headquarters, 251 F Street, at Washington, addressed to the chaplains, in which we were pledged to an effort to secure the co-operation of all the Associations. Upon the basis of this pledge, and work already performed, they were asked to answer, frankly and fully, the list of eighty-five questions which were appended. These interrogatories were prepared with the utmost care by Mr. Colyer, and then submitted by him to some half-score of the most competent chaplains, and form a most ingenious and curious document; and the responses, if carefully and conscientiously prepared, would furnish a remarkable body of information. (This paper is given in Appendix E, as returned to the Committee by one of the chaplains.)

More than sixty chaplains returned these circulars, with very full replies to the questions, being nearly all then with the Army of the Potomac; and these papers are now in the possession of a member of the Army Committee.

VIII. In September application was made to the Committee, by Rev. J. S. Inskip, chaplain of the 14th N. Y. V., for a Chapel Tent. In urging this matter, he said:

"For want of a chapel tent my work has been most seriously hindered. Most of our meetings are held at night in my quarters, where the accommodations are by no means adequate. Had we a suitable tent, we could have a very large attendance at these meetings, which are held nightly; and I am confident great good could, with the Divine blessing, be accomplished. * * * I am in earnest in my application, knowing how important the matter is. Help me, if you can. Should you do any thing, it must be done quickly."

A special meeting of the Association was at once called, and the tent provided, the first gift of a chapel tent for the soldiers. Nor had the lack been supplied when the special convention assembled, for it was a topic of consideration at that time; and a memorial upon the subject, drawn by Mr. E. S. Tobey, President of the Boston Association—whose generous charities in behalf of our soldiers, and cordial friendship for all Young Men's Christian Associations, it delights me here to mention—was addressed to the Secretary of War under the authority of the Convention. But these tents could only be serviceable when the regiments were in camps somewhat permanent; when the army was on the march, transportation could not be furnished for them, and there was very little opportunity for their use.

IX. The amount of MONEY PAID OUT by the Committee in their work was not considerable. At no time were more than two persons employed, Messrs. Lockwood and Rowan, and these at moderate salaries; on this account but $130 was expended; the actual expenses, however, of all who rendered any services were paid. No compensation was ever made by the Committee to Mr. Colyer, for his long and faithful service, involving a complete relinquishment of his business for the time; his was a free-will offering.

The gross sum of money received by the Committee, and by them expended, was $2,874, which was mostly collected under the sanction of the Committee appointed at the 6th of June meeting, by a communication, copied by lithograph, (see Appendix C,) from a letter in the handwriting of the treasurer, to which was appended a summary statement of the work then performed. These, addressed to persons of known liberality, met with the practical response I have indicated. Some collections were taken in churches, and some contributions were received, which were prompted by notices and appeals in the newspapers.

X. Allusion has already been made to the EFFECT produced UPON THE POPULAR MIND by the action of the Committee. It now only remains that I call your attention briefly, but particularly, to this topic. All means of publicity open were quickly employed. The papers gave generous reports of all our meet-

ings; stirring incidents and judicious appeals were cheerfully assigned a place in their columns, by editors; and extended letters descriptive of the work, and detailing its interesting and useful features, were freely published by the religious journals. The result was, that dormant Associations were aroused to a consideration of the demands of this great work. Some sent forward contributions to our treasury; many, gifts for hospital needs; and letters were frequently received asking for instructions respecting our mode of operations, in the home and distant fields, and detailed statements, to be used in their public meetings; and many of our workers, on special invitation, visited other associations and localities to present orally the claims and inviting character of the field.

On or about the 25th of August, Rev. Stephen H. Tyng, Jr., delivered two addresses in Philadelphia upon this work, one to the public generally, and one before the Association of that city, upon special invitation. In the latter address, he sketched before our brethren the two great branches of the service as recognized by the Committee of which he was a member, and described our system of labor in each. At this meeting their Army Committee was reorganized for active service, under the chairmanship of Mr. Peter B. Simmons—a dear friend of many members of our Association, as well as my own.

But the interest thus excited was not limited to the young men in these Associations; it extended to the whole body of Christian people, and all were awakened, not only in respect to the physical well-being of the soldiers, but in regard to their souls' health also.

And thus were the people prepared to render the National Society a cordial support when at last it should be organized. Will any one pausing here say this whole work, even in its largest statement, was small and insignificant compared with the necessities of the case? We must all agree that this is true; but we must not forget that, until this enterprise started, nothing now generally remembered was done, and that for months this was the only agency in the field. The agent of the Boston Tract Society, Mr. Alvord, did not visit the front for purposes of survey, even, until after the October letter of Mr. Colyer—to which I shall more particularly advert—was issued, for on

that visit he called upon our representative with one in his hand. Do not let us forget, that but few at this period comprehended the times upon which we had fallen, for many were surprised when the Executive issued the call for 75,000 militia to put down the rebellion.

XI. The reports of the delegates who had made even one visit to the hospitals and camps, after "Bull Run," satisfied the Army Committee that no local organization could cope successfully with the vast work to which, in the Providence of God, the Christians of the land were thus called; and THE IDEA of a GENERAL SOCIETY, which should be the organ of the Associations, was early suggested by Mr. Colyer, discussed in the Committee and among leading members of our Association, and heartily approved.

On the 22d August, the proposition assumed definite form, in a communication of Mr. Colyer from Washington to his colleagues in New York, urging the immediate issue of a general circular by them, calling the Convention; this course was substantially agreed upon by the Committee, and Mr. Colyer at once notified of the concurrence of views upon the subject. And he was requested to go forward, in Washington, with such influences as would promote the success of the movement.

The circular letter, with the appended questions, was then issued, it having for some time been in preparation, and distributed among the chaplains of the Army of the Potomac. In New York, the Army Committee immediately issued a letter to the Associations of the loyal States, accompanied by a brief report of the work thus far accomplished, dated 2d September, (see Appendix D,) urging its importance for the whole army; the keeping of delegates with its moving columns, bearing their supplies of reading matter and of soldier-comforts wherever they might advance; requesting the prompt appointment of an Army Committee in each Association; a meeting of all these committees at an early day for conference in New York, and the formation of plans for future work. On the 16th September, after a protracted conference with our Washington representative, Mr. Miller, the President of the Association in that city, acceded to the proposition for the special Convention, and promised to attend; and on the evening of

that day, Mr. Colyer started North for the purpose of urging the matter in personal interviews upon the leading Associations. All of the day and evening of the 17th, was spent by him in Philadelphia in pressing this matter upon prominent Association-men in that city, and especially upon Mr. George H. Stuart, Chairman of the last Central Committee of the Confederation, and upon Mr. Grant, the Secretary. They doubted the power or right of the Committee to call such a CONVENTION, and did not encourage the scheme. Mr. Grant, however, requested the preparation of a letter presenting in detail the reasons for calling a convention, and the considerations which rendered a national organization desirable or expedient.

After conference with the Committee in New York, Mr. Colyer, on the evening of the 18th, started for Boston, and on the two following days had conferences with Messrs. Tobey, Story, and others of the Boston Association upon this plan of the Army Committee. The suggestion was heartily seconded by that Association, and at its next meeting, October 3d, delegates were appointed to the proposed Convention, although the day had not been then named. The cordial reception of our proposition by the Boston brethren greatly encouraged the Army Committee and the Association in pressing on to practical efficiency the new movement, as did also the generous sympathy and countenance of our brethren of the Brooklyn Association, with whom it is a delight to feel we are in hearty concord.

At a meeting of the Association on the 23d September, the plan of the Army Committee for a special Convention was submitted, and a resolution was then adopted indorsing the same, commending the action thus far taken, and creating a Committee, of which Mr. Colyer was the chairman, to conduct the correspondence and arrange the details of the Convention.

On the 24th, Mr. Colyer, now charged by the Association and the Committee just created with a special duty, called upon Mr. Grant of Philadelphia to urge again the immediate issue of a call for a convention. He reported that he had attempted to have a meeting of the Central Committee, but no quorum could be obtained; renewedly urged the preparation of the letter he

suggested in the first interview, and said, in the event of the calling of the Convention, it would probably be printed with the call, as giving the reasons for it. (See letter, Appendix F.)

Proceeding at once to Washington, the letter, of two and one-half printed octavo pages, was at once prepared, signed by the chairman in the name of the special Committee on the Convention, and, October 3d, was dispatched, in print, to Mr. Grant at Philadelphia, and a large package placed at the disposal of his Committee, and it was also circulated by our own Committees. This letter is a careful and condensed argument in favor of the calling of the Convention, and in it the proposed general society first received its name, the "Christian Commission."

On the 15th of October Mr. Grant, as Secretary of the Central Committee, addressed a letter to Mr. Vernon, our President, from which I take the following:

"The appeal made to the Central Committee desiring them to call a Convention of Associations to consider the best means of operating upon the army, has been under consideration, and upon the whole appears to be favorably received."

And on the same day he addressed Mr. Colyer a letter, of which the following is an extract—referring to the receipt of the circulars:

"Every day since, I have endeavored to get an interview with Mr. Stuart. I saw him for a few moments on Saturday and spoke of the matter to him. He felt so unwell that he could not give it due consideration, and requested me to let it rest for a day or two. The Committee, upon the whole, are favorable to calling a convention, but without Mr. Stuart's concurrence and co-operation we are unwilling to take any decisive step.

"I have the hope that we will come to a definite arrangement in a day or two, when I will immediately communicate with you."

And in a postscript he adds:

"The other members of the committee were in conference to-day, and appeared to conclude that the Convention must be called."

Some days thereafter, Mr. Vernon received an official letter from Mr. Grant, dated 19th October, in which he says:

"A meeting of the Central Committee was held yesterday afternoon, when it was unanimously resolved to call the Convention which your Association so earnestly desires."

This city, and our rooms in the Bible House, were selected as the place of holding the Convention, subject to the approval of this Association as to place, and the 7th of November proposed as the date of meeting; this, however, was subsequently changed to the 14th, to give opportunity for communication with the most distant associations.

November 2d, Mr. Grant again addressed Mr. Vernon as follows:

"Mr. Stuart has gone down to Washington, with one of the chaplains, and doubtless will return with an increased interest in the important movement. He desired me to ask you to get the circular, or an allusion to it, inserted in the New York religious newspapers; and also, as your Association has been most active among the soldiers, to suggest to you the propriety of some one of the New York brethren being appointed to bring forward (in a written paper, if necessary) the subject before the Convention; probably Bro. Colyer would be the best one to do this."

On the day thus designated, the special Convention of Christian Associations met at the place designated by Mr. Grant; fifteen associations, viz., Boston, Bridgeport, Waterbury, Stamford, Danbury, Troy, Amsterdam, Brooklyn, Buffalo, Trenton, Philadelphia, Washington, Cincinnati, Chicago and New York, were represented by fifty delegates. George H. Stuart, since the efficient chairman of the Commission—whose deserved fame is in all lands—was selected for president, and the sessions were continued till the evening of the 15th.

The address of welcome, customary at all our Conventions, was delivered by Rev. Dr. Tyng, in which he presented fully, and with rare eloquence and power, our purpose in urging the call of the Convention, the vast work waiting, and the plain duty of the Christian men and women of the land, not only in respect of the proposed work, but touching also the war and its cause.

The numerous phases of religious work in the army were detailed, and fully discussed by the various delegates; and a long, elaborate and most interesting statement was made by Mr. Colyer, representing and speaking in behalf of the two committees of which he was a member, and of our association, covering the whole field of service, and founded upon his ample personal experience and the vast amount of information derived from the body of correspondence already mentioned.

A draft of a proposed plan for a Christian Commission, prepared by Charles Demond, Esq., of Boston, who served as a member of the new organization with the most untiring devotion till the end of the war, was submitted by the business committee, and after careful discussion, and some modification, adopted. Twelve gentlemen, clergymen and laymen, one or more residing in each of the cities, Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Buffalo, Washington, Cincinnati, Chicago and St. Louis, were placed upon the Commission, and it was declared to have been established as the organ and executive agent of the Christian Associations of the land, instructed to communicate with them through their army committees, and to report direct to them.

For fuller details respecting this interesting and historic gathering, reference must be had to the tenth annual report of the Association, which contains a sketch of the proceedings, written, as I understand, by the gentleman who acted as Secretary of the Convention.

Suffer me to advert for one moment to another incident of the Special Convention, as illustrating the views of the workers in this enterprise at that early period, respecting the national conflict, and the results to be secured in it, and reflecting the highest credit upon them.

At the last session, one of the New York delegates, Mr. Ballard, under the sanction of the members of "The Army Committee," offered, among others then presented, the following resolution:

"*Resolved*, That the doctrine enunciated by Major-General Fremont with respect to the emancipation of the slaves of rebels, and the more recent utterances of General Burnside, Senator Wilson and the Hon. George Bancroft, in this city, and the Secretary of War at Washington, foreshadowing the eventual rooting out of slavery, as the cause of the rebellion, indicate alike a moral, political and military necessity; and, in the judgment of this Convention, the public sentiment of the North is now fully in sympathy with any practicable scheme which may be presented for the extirpation of this national evil, and will accept such result as the only consistent issue of this contest between civilization and barbarism."

This resolution was opposed by the Boston delegation on the ground that such a deliverance by the Convention would interfere with the raising of money in their city for the new Com-

mission, and was not among the objects of the Convention; and by the President, Mr. George H. Stuart, Rev. Dr. Baird, of Philadelphia, and Mr. Scudder, of the Trenton Association, on general grounds of inexpediency, as then understood. On a test vote, under a motion to lay the resolution on the table, the Convention declared in favor of its adoption by strongly rejecting the motion. But, the members of our own delegation, not under the influence of a weakness of purpose, (for this they have never manifested,) but controlled by an earnest desire not to defeat, or in any way hinder the new organization in pressing forward the great work for Christ, so dear to their own hearts, yielded to the solicitations of the minority, and obtained leave to withdraw the resolution. Within two weeks, however, it received the approval of a vast concourse of the citizens of New York, at a public meeting, and subsequent events have vindicated every one of its enunciations.

Abraham Lincoln, just, wise, pure, martyred, by sanctioning the principles it declares with his official power and title, made his "a name which Liberty herself, in every country where her power is acknowledged, has consecrated to immortal renown," placed the Nation on the side with Divine Providence, and made the Government, in fact, as in name, Free.

The task assigned to me is now completed. You have seen, but in glimpses, how the work was commenced; that the field grew wide and long before the laborers; that our brothers did not bow down beneath the burdens, but manfully trusting in Him who has said, "as thy day so shall thy strength be," strove to bear them on; that great success crowned their efforts, "the blessing of him that was ready to perish" came upon them, and upon the Association; that the work became popular, one Association after another taking it up, the churches and people of Christ approving it, until at last it is all centered in one national organization, born of our early efforts, and in our own rooms, and having a name of our own selection: the United States Christian Commission.

It is not my province to advert, at length, to the vast benefits conferred upon the whole land by the untiring ministrations

and appeals of the new organization. The whole of that great story is soon to be written. But we rejoice in it all, as the father rejoices over the son whom he has educated and trained, and who is developing in grand deeds of Christian usefulness, his original plan of life.

Nor is it for me here to rehearse the transactions, or the line of dealings which resulted in a practical exclusion of our Association from a participation in the general work, as representatives of the Christian public of our own city, as was contemplated by the organic law of the Commission. Suffice it to say that every thing was done and conceded by us that it was fit for Christian men to do or concede; we were blameless; but the measures which resulted in a modification and perhaps restriction of the charitable impulses of our citizens, and diverted into other less efficient and less appropriate channels their regal benefactions, originated in and urged from another city, can not be vindicated or upheld upon any principles of Christian manliness or good faith. Even the high character of the gentlemen named long afterwards, as the New York Committee of the Commission, their indefatigable services, and their ardent devotion to the work they had assumed, did not restore the National Society to its proper place in the confidence and regard of our citizens.

Neither is it permitted me to describe the subsequent work of other Army Committees, of Committees on Hospital Watchers, and on Public Meetings, in respect of the moral and religious aspects of the war; nor can I follow in his unpaid but blessed labors, our former Vice-President, Mr. Colyer, in his subsequent individual campaign of a year or more, with the Union Army, and among the poor of the Southern States, where his labors were crowned with a distinguished honor. He there opened the first school for the freedmen in North Carolina.

To the new enterprise of the Association, as here sketched, we may apply, not improperly, the words of Lord Bacon: "If a man perform that which hath not been attempted before; or attempted and given over; or hath been achieved, but not with so good circumstance; he shall purchase more honor, than by effecting a matter of greater difficulty or virtue, wherein he is but a follower." Here, however, the matter was

of great difficulty and virtue, and had never "been attempted before;" and surely it was of "Goodness," which the same wise man tells us "is the affecting of the weal of man, * * of all virtues and dignities of the mind the greatest, being the character of the Deity."

Thrice glad that the Saviour and Master, whom we follow, has thus permitted our Association to serve in His great vineyard, and has crowned the service with the abundant evidence of His approval and love; recognizing the weakness of all mere earthly effort and influence, the utter inadequacy of human means and powers, and knowing that "every good gift is of God," we bend in joyous gratitude before Him, saying, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy name give glory."

Brethren! Are we to-day, with far happier surroundings, a more numerous membership, well adjusted machinery, greater resources, and the active sympathy and co-operation of the Christian men and women of New York, prepared to continue our work in the chosen field at home, with the alacrity, vigor, and perseverance which characterized the Association in that just described? The souls of the army of young men who crowd these busy streets, and serve in countless banks and stores and warehouses, many of whom nightly frequent the dens of vice and infamy which pollute our city, or now tread, with careless steps, the dizzy height of great temptations, call for but one answer. For that, those who love them are waiting; and the blessed Saviour, to whom you have pledged your best efforts, your most exalted endeavors, yourselves even, stoops from His heavenly throne to catch that answer in its earliest utterance, and to watch your performance. Answer ye!

"By their fruits shall ye know them."

APPENDIX.

A.

ARMY COMMITTEE OF THE N. Y. Y. M. CHR'N ASSOC'N,
Office, 2½ Wall st. Address, Box 1219, P. O.

DEAR SIR—We take great pleasure in submitting for your examination and approval a copy of "The Soldier's Hymn Book." We have no hesitation in seeking for this little book a wide circulation, knowing as we do that it meets the wants of the soldiers, and that it is adapted to become an instrumentality of much good in our missionary efforts among them. Our first edition of 25,000 copies is now quite exhausted. We have supplied numerous regiments at Washington, Fortress Monroe, Trenton, Elmira, New York and other places. The orders upon our table, from chaplains, more than cover any ability of supply we possess. Rev. Mr. Chidlaw, Chaplain of Col. Anderson's Kentucky Brigade, asks us for 10,000 copies; the several regiments of the Excelsior Brigade have made repeated requests for 5,000 copies; and similar applications daily reach us from the camps near Washington, begging us to send an immediate supply. The Chaplains unite in expressing their satisfaction with the book and their wish to give a copy to every man in the army. What are we to do? We dare not decline the work which God has, in His Providence, opened before us. We must go on, in the confidence that the Master will furnish the requisite means through His servants.

To further this object, we have thought that individual members of the several churches might be willing to assume the responsibility of the work in such regiments as they may prefer. $25 will supply every man in a regiment a thousand strong. Can not you help us to this extent, or will you not collect and send to us contributions which we may apply to the distribution of a book so universally popular and useful among our volunteers?

We ask money for no other branch of our many-sided work; but the exigency of so sudden a demand for our Hymn Book seems to warrant us in making this appeal.

Awaiting your reply, I am, in behalf of the Army Committee,

Your obedient servant,

FRANK W. BALLARD,
Sec'y and Treas'r.

B.

OFFICE OF THE ARMY COMMITTEE, 2½ Wall street,
Post Office Address, Box 1219, P. O.
NEW YORK, ————.

MY DEAR SIR—I have been requested by the Army Committee of the New York Young Men's Christian Association to open a correspondence with you in relation to the work they have assumed. It is, specifically, the supply of the religious wants of the soldiers. We are anxious to become the medium of communication between chaplains and the different religious publication societies of the city. Such arrangements have already been made as will enable us to furnish you any books, tracts, papers, &c., that you may require in the prosecution of your work. Our Soldier's Hymn Book will be forwarded to you for gratuitous distribution among the men of your regiment as soon as we receive an order to that effect from yourself. You will greatly aid and encourage our patrons by communicating, from time to time, any incidents connected with the religious work among the soldiers.

That God may greatly bless you in your labor of love, and give you success in winning souls to Jesus, shall be the constant prayer of

Your brother in Christ,

STEPHEN H. TYNG, JR.

C.

NEW YORK, August 3d, 1861.

DEAR SIR—A condensed report of what has been done by the "Army Committee" of the New York Young Men's Christian Association will be found annexed. Our labors have not been in vain, as abundant evidence assures us. Providence has superadded to our other duties that of ministering to the lonely sufferers in the several Hospitals in and near Washington, where some nine hundred sick and wounded soldiers are now confined. To occupy this field has seemed to be our obvious duty, and we have already been permitted to cultivate it advantageously.

The members of the Young Men's Christian Association eagerly offer to perform Hospital duty, asking only that their expenses shall be paid by the Committee. There is no time to be lost in prosecuting this eminently Christian work, and we appeal earnestly for prompt and liberal contributions to sustain it. May we not count upon your co-operation in this mission of mercy?

Any donation you may see fit to make will be gratefully received and duly acknowledged. In behalf of the "Army Committee," I am, with much respect, Your obedient servant,

FRANK W. BALLARD, *Treas'r.*
No. 2½ Wall st. P. O. Address, Box 1219.

To the Relatives and Friends of the Soldiers in the United States Army:

The Army Committee of the New York Young Men's Christian Association presents the following Statement of its Operations in providing for the religious wants of our army in the field:

Publications.—Thus far two editions (35,000 copies) have been issued of that excellent and popular collection of hymns and songs already celebrated as the "Soldier's Hymn Book." The reception of this little book by the volunteers is most enthusiastic, and the demands for it far exceed the present possibility of supply. At the request of the Committee, Rev. C. M. Butler, D. D., of Washington City, is compiling for the use of the Army Chaplains a collection of laws, usages and hints relative to Chaplains and their work. This compilation will be issued as soon as completed.

Visitation.—At the request of home friends, individuals among the volunteers, temporarily here, have been sought out, counseled and cared for, and the Committee still stand ready to respond to similar letters of suggestion from the relatives and friends of the soldiers. Every regiment of troops passing through the city during the last six weeks has been visited, and the Chaplain waited upon, and generally a supply of books furnished. The various camps and barracks have all been systematically visited and cared for. Among them may be named Saltersville, Camp Scott, Fort Schuyler, Riker's Island, South Brothers, Willett's Point, &c., &c.

Distribution.—There has been a systematic and generous circulation of hymn books, song books, Bibles, prayer books, mission services, tracts and religious papers. Regiments on the way have been carefully supplied with religious reading, to their entire satisfaction. In some instances every man has had a book given him. By express, packages of hymn books, &c., have been forwarded to Washington, Alexandria, Fortress Monroe, Easton, Penn., Camp Olden, N. J., Cairo, Ills., Camp Holt, Ky., &c. In response to letters from Chaplains who complain of the inefficiency of existing arrangements, the Committee has made preparations for forwarding supplies of secular papers to the seat of war.

Mission Services.—More than one hundred week-day prayer meetings, as also numerous Sabbath services, have been arranged and maintained by members of the committee and the association, in connection with Mr. Lockwood, the Chaplain. Some of the encampments and regimental quarters are thus supplied by the committee, exclusively, with religious services; among others, Riker's Island, Elm Park, and until recently, the Anderson Zouaves at Saltersville, N. J. In co-operation with the regular Chaplains numerous devotional meetings have been held with the soldiers at Palace Garden, Willett's Point, Camp Scott, East New York, the Battery, Park Barracks, &c., &c.

Correspondence.—A single member of the committee has conducted a correspondence with one hundred and fifty Army Chaplains, located at various points, from most of whom prompt and full replies have been received, all breathing a most excellent spirit, and giving earnest of an intense interest on their part in the spiritual welfare of the soldiers. In answer to its circulars and requests for assistance, the committee has also received many letters of encouragement and sympathy from our foremost citizens.

Agencies.—The entire time of Rev. L. C. Lockwood is occupied with this work in New York and its vicinity, and the small sum for which he is willing to perform these labors is the only disbursement of the kind made by the committee. To co-operate with him the entire membership of the association is committed, and selections are made from them of the most suitable individuals to take part in the meetings and assist in the system of visitation and

distribution. Rev. C. M. Butler, D. D., has kindly acted with and for the committee in Washington, and Rev. M. B. Smith, of Passaic, N. J., is now on a tour through the West and Northwest, with a view to advise them of the religious condition and wants of the camps in that quarter. An intelligent and observant correspondent, in the very vanguard of the army, also supplies the committee with valuable information of a practical character.

Aid to Chaplains.—The committee has acted as the mouthpiece of the Chaplains in presenting a memorial to the War Department respecting the appointment of improper persons to that position; and also one requesting that chapel tents be provided for the several regiments. In this matter they have been courteously treated by the government, and have received in return for their exertions the warmest thanks of that noble body of men whose interest they aimed to advance. Nor have their endeavors in this direction been vain.

Such is a summary of the missionary work of the New York Young Men's Christian Association.

We have enlisted for the war. The field is of vast extent and our operations are unlimited as to locality. We aim to do good to ALL the soldiers; and what has been accomplished serves to show us how much remains to be done, and how welcome to the soldiers are these efforts for their spiritual good. But our plans are cramped and fettered by the lack of money for publication expenses; and where large editions of our Soldier's Hymn Book are demanded, we are compelled to limit the supply from want of funds to pay for printing the needed number. We appeal, therefore, for contributions, to all who feel an interest in this glorious work. Address, Box 1219, Post Office, New York City,

GILEAD B. NASH,
FRANK W. BALLARD,
STEPHEN H. TYNG, Jr.,
P. HARWOOD VERNON,

Office of the Committee, No. 2½ Wall st. *Army Committee.*

D.

Office of the Army Committee, 2½ Wall street,
New York, September 2, 1861.

To the Young Men's Christian Association of ———

Dear Brethren:—We hand you herewith a partial report* of the labors of the Army Committee of the New York Young Men's Christian Association.

Providence has superadded to our other duties that of ministering to the patient sufferers in the various hospitals in and near Washington, where several hundred sick and wounded soldiers are now confined. To occupy this field has seemed to be our obvious duty, and we have already been permitted to cultivate it advantageously.

We have established a depository in Washington, and also sent a delegation, which is still engaged in active personal visitation, and we desire the means

* The Summary Statement, "C," was attached to this circular.

of keeping it *with the Army*, wherever that may be. We do not provide merely for New York soldiers, but for those of every loyal State, and we feel confident, therefore, that you will favorably regard, and promptly respond to the appeal we now make to you for assistance and co-operation in carrying on our work.

Could you see its fruits, as we have, and hear the blessings of brave men for it, it would arouse your enthusiastic emotion. Dear brethren, allow us to suggest the immediate appointment of an Army Committee from your Association, to confer with our Committee. We need assistance of every description, and we believe that no field of usefulness has yet been entered by the Young Men's Christian Associations of America, so wide and remunerative as that which God has opened amongst our devoted volunteers in camp and in the hospitals.

With prayers for your welfare, and that the love of Christ may "constrain you" to a prompt and hearty response,

We remain yours, fraternally,

GILEAD B. NASH, *Chairman.*
FRANK W. BALLARD, *Treasurer.*
STEPHEN H. TYNG, JR.
P. HARWOOD VERNON, *Prest. N. Y. Y. M. C. A.*
EDWARD SELF, *Vice-Prest.* " " "
NOBLE HEATH, JR., *Cor, Sec.* " " "
VINCENT COLYER, *at Washington City.*

Address Box 1219 P. O. *Army Committee.*

E.

WASHINGTON, August, 1861.

DEAR SIR:—The undersigned, having been appointed resident representative, at this place, of the Army Committee of the New York Young Men's Christian Association, and desiring to aid in every practicable way the cause you are engaged in, respectfully requests you to read the accompanying questions, and, so far as you may deem proper, fill up the blanks attached with clear and satisfactory answers. The Committee which he represents has already published, paid for, and distributed 50,000 Soldiers' Hymn Books; distributed 200,000 books and Tracts; kept 20 men, gratuitously, among the camps, preaching; and provided necessaries and religious instruction for many hospitals. It is our intention now to enlarge our efforts, and call upon all the Young Men's Christian Associations of the North to unite in providing you with such materials as the answers to the following questions will show you require.

Very respectfully, your brother in the Lord,

VINCENT COLYER,
251 F Street, Washington, D. C.

OFFICE IN NEW YORK, No. 2½ WALL STREET.

1. Name and locality of camp. Near Darnstown, Md.
2. State. Maryland.
3. Military department. Potomac, sub. Shenandoah.
4. Date of filling up this inquiry. October 4th, 1861.
5. Designation of the body inquired of. Second Mass. Vols.
6. Name of its commanding officer. George H. Gordon, Col.
7. Name of chaplain. Alonzo H. Quint.
8. To what church does he belong? Mather Ch., Jamaica Plains, Mass.
9. What denomination? Orthodox Congregational.
10. Age of chaplain. Thirty-three.
11. Place of nativity. Barnstead, N. H.
12. If graduated? Yes.
13. Where? Dartmouth College. 1846.
14. Where regiment recruited? Eastern part of Mass.
15. Predominating nativity. America.
16. What other nativity? Irish considerably—some Germans.
17. Do the men mostly read English? Yes.
18. When mustered into U. S. service? May 11th, 1861.
19. At what places stationed since, and how long at each? Left Mass. July 8. Hagerstown, Martinsburg, etc., a day or two each. Harper's Ferry, four weeks; Hagerstown, two weeks. Here a month, now.
20. How strong when mustered in? 1046.
21. Present strength? 974; but it is to be immediately filled up.
22. What supply of books have you received? Large bundles from both Am. Tract Societies. 500 Testaments; a few Bibles; 600 army hymns, and books purchased from money given me, or my own.
23. From whom did you receive them? Am. Tract Societies, Christian Association, N. Y., and most from friends.
24. What supply of tracts and papers? Very little, except tracts as above.
25. From whom received? As above.
26. What supply of books have you now on hand? Two bundles—probably 500 vols.; but they are on the road to me.
27. What supply of tracts and papers? None.
28. What kind of religious books are most liked by the men and approved of by yourself? *Evangelical*, but narratives.
29. What kind of tracts most liked, etc? Hard to tell; our men read all.
30. What kind of books do you most need to supply your present wants? Some for *Catholics*; I mean *good* Catholic books. Otherwise, probably well supplied by packages coming.
31. What kind of tracts or papers? Temperance tracts and weekly religious papers, and *especially* the Messenger, or Tract Journal.
32. How many pious officers are there in your regiment? Hard to decide, as the piety is reality; one helps in prayer meetings.
33. How many pious men are there in your regiment? I think about 100; but numerous others are backsliders; and 300 Catholics.
34. Have you their names enrolled, as the members of their respective churches at home? No.
35. Have you organized them into a provisional or a temporary church, by a written covenant or other form? No.
36. Have you any organized daily or weekly prayer meetings? Yes, Sabbath evening and Wednesday evening.
37. Have you Bible classes—Sunday schools? No.
38. Have you singing classes for social or devotional purposes? Yes, but not very regular.
39. Have you a suitable tent for public meetings? No.
40. Do you think it desirable to have one? I doubt it, as we can not get it transported by Quartermaster.
41. Have you among your men *tract distributors*, or any system of tract distribution? I have some distributors, but do most myself.
42. Have you any associations for social improvement? No.
43. Are there any provident or mutual benefit societies within the regiment? No.

44. Do the men generally save or send home a part of their wages? Yes, most money.
45. Do you take up any collection for the sick, or for religious and benevolent objects for the soldiers or their families? No.
46. Does the general discipline of the camp appear better or worse than usual? Improving *very much.*
47. Are ardent spirits sold? No.
Wine or beer? No.
48. Do the men obtain spirits otherwise? Rarely; our discipline is strict.
49. Is there much intoxication? No.
50. What is about the average daily number of men sent to the guard-house? Lately, not one a day; formerly, it was different.
51. Are these cases chiefly from intoxication? Not chiefly.
52. Have you temperance societies? No.
53. Have you pledges circulated or associations formed against profanity? No.
54. Is card playing and gambling prevalent among your men? To some extent.
55. Are the men generally in good spirits? Excellent.
56. Are means systematically used to promote cheerfulness, by games, entertainments, etc.? Yes—rather not systematically.
57. What innocent games would you recommend as desirable? Ball, quoits, etc.
58. Do religious people or agents of religious societies visit you? No.
59. How often? Once, as we passed through New York.
60. Who are they? Agent of Y. M. Asso.
61. Do the men write home often? Very.
62. Are mails facilitated? Yes, I see to that.
63. Are you often called upon by the soldiers to write home to their friends? Very rarely; our men write.
Do you find time to do this? Yes.
64. Is your time fully occupied, and in what way?
65. What obstacles chiefly interfere with the performance of religious services? Rain or marches.
66. Do you enjoy facilities for personal conversation with the soldiers on religious subjects? Yes, to the fullest extent.
67. Do the men confide to you their personal feelings and private affairs? Many do.
68. Do you keep a record of interesting incidents which might be instructive and useful in the future? Yes.
69. Have you services and preaching every Sabbath, or only in fair weather? Sometimes in wet weather, 3½ P.M.
70. At what hours are they held? 3½ P.M.
71. Are the men marched in by companies or is it left voluntary? By companies.
72. What is the average attendance? All, except sick and guard.
73. Can you find time to visit your sick at the Government hospitals? Yes; have been to Frederick and to Baltimore hospitals for that purpose.
74. Do you keep an accurate record of the deaths, together with the place and circumstances? Yes.
75. Do the officers generally see that a company of men are detailed to attend funerals? Always, according to army regulations.
76. Do you carefully mark the place of interment when practicable? Yes.
77. Do you preserve the effects and communicate with the friends of deceased? Yes.
78. If the "Ladies' Aid Societies'" were to send you delicacies and necessary comforts for the sick of your regiment, could you find time to distribute them? Certainly, and with pleasure.
79. Would you like to do this as part of your pastoral labor? Yes.
80. What articles would you think most desirable? We are now richly supplied; our regiment has a fund.
81. Have you enough bed-ticks for your regimental hospital? Plenty.

82. Have you enough sheets and pillow cases? Abundance.
83. Would a few socks, or pocket handkerchiefs, or towels, be desirable? Government provides socks, and I can not distribute handkerchiefs still remaining of our ample supply.
84. Jellies, or light home-made wines or cordials, and what kind are preferred? We have all; needed, some jellies.
85. Is it worth while to send you farina, or broma, or cocoa for the sick, or does the Government supply you? Government and our fund gives us all needed.

☞ If this is not called for within two days after you have received it, please fill up and forward it, without delay, to Frank W. Ballard, 2½ Wall street, New York.

My dear Sir:—I answer your inquiries to the best of my ability. Our regiment was richly fitted out by an ample fund. Moneys were also placed in my hands for benevolence. I need now, if you mean to do us some good, some books which *Romanists* will take; and I would particularly like religious newspapers. Our men are a reading set. Our colonel and lieutenant-colonel are old army officers, and knew what was wanted in all fittings-up, and, therefore, we have every physical comfort possible. It is a Massachusetts regiment.

My work is pleasant, and, I believe, attended with good results. With the blessing of God, I hope for much success. I have every opportunity which officers could possibly give. I have never met a disrespectful word or look.

With the best wishes for your success, and admiration for your methods,

Yours in Christian fellowship,

ALONZO H. QUINT,
Chaplain Mass. 2d.

F.

Washington City, D. C., *October* 1, 1861.

Dear Sir:—Having been occupied for these last ten weeks in the army, at Washington, as representative of the New York Association, the necessity for a much more extended organization, in order to meet, even approximately, the Christian wants of the soldier, has so impressed itself upon me, that I can not avoid writing to you for aid. I wish to ask the Committee, of which you are the honored secretary, to earnestly consider the propriety of calling a general convention, at some central place, at the earliest practicable day, to consider the spiritual wants of the young men of our army, in order that the same may be provided for by the appointing of a "Christian Commission," whose duty it shall be to take entire charge of this work.

The government has now over 250,000 men enlisted, the far greater majority of whom are young men, and not a few of them members of our Associations.

These young men are risking their lives for their country, exposed to constant hardships, and subjected to all the temptations and debasing influences of camp life. They are liable to sickness and prolonged suffering from wounds in hospital, and to sudden death upon the battle-field. To meet the great wants of these young men, under circumstances which so urgently call upon our Christian sympathies and gratitude, (for they are assembled in defense of our homes, our rights, and our government!) no adequate exertion has yet been made. Our Society in New York has raised and expended $2,000, and forwarded books, tracts and hospital stores worth $3,000 more. The Washington City Society has had its members actively employed in the camps around this city, until the army became so large that it was entirely beyond its reach, and it had exhausted its means. Your Society has sent a deputation to inquire into the matter and report. Other Societies, of which we have no advices (except the Boston, which has done a good work for the navy) have doubtless done much. Yet it is all but as a drop in the bucket, compared with what ought to be done, and what the great societies whom you represent are capable of doing.

Let me inclose a few brief extracts from letters I have received from chaplains:

"Allow me, in behalf of the regiment of which I am chaplain, to thank your Association for the books and tracts so kindly provided for the men. Could the friends of Jesus know how gratefully these books and tracts are received by our soldiers, they would be prompted to increased liberality. * * * If these works, added to the labors of the chaplains, accomplished no more than to save the religious portion of our army from backsliding, it would prove a mighty work; but their potency for good in increasing the *morale* of the army can only be measured by those who have an opportunity to judge of their effects.

"W. P. Strickland, *Chaplain 48th N. Y. Volunteers.*"

"May God bless you in your labor of love and charity. I believe the seed of truth sown during this war will be the means of awakening many souls to Christ. Pray for me that my faith fail not.

"J. R. Carpenter, *Chaplain 1st Reg't D. C. Vols.*"

"I rejoice in the Lord at your 'labor of love.' In my opinion this is a work second only in importance to the appointment of the highest officers in command. Blessings upon you and your true yoke-fellows everywhere for trying to introduce more of the Spirit of God into our ranks. Camp life abounds with temptations, and the soldier's calling is demoralizing in the extreme.

"W. H. Cudworth, *Chaplain 1st Mass. Vols.*"

"I would do much violence to my own feelings of gratitude did I not avail myself of this opportunity of thanking you, on behalf of myself and also the religious portion of the 31st regiment Pennsylvania Volunteers, for your very timely supply of religious books, &c. No person can safely calculate the religious destitution of the army, unless they had practical experience of living in camp. Without such an agency as this which you hold here, many persons would suffer severely. May the Most High prosper your work of faith, and bless you and those who are associated with you in so good and so necessary a cause. R. W. Oliver, *Chaplain 31st Reg't Pa. Volunteers.*"

I could add many more like these, but this will suffice to show how the work here is regarded by those who are most interested and the best capable of judging of its necessity and usefulness.

It will be seen, then, that I do not ask you to try an experiment, but to

continue and enlarge a work which is already practically under way and successfully working, but which has now grown so large that we can not do better than resign it into hands capable of giving it the dimensions it deserves, and I trust will receive from you.

I need not urge the necessity of prompt as well as decisive action—for it must be apparent to every one, that whatever is done effectively in this army work must be done *quickly*. At any moment, here, a terrible battle may take place, and all along our lines, (in the West particularly,) engagements are daily occurring; besides, the troops are continually in motion, and the habits of the men are forming daily, either for good or evil.

The work is so extensive and needs such large resources, that single Associations can do but little, and for them to act independently of each other is to increase vastly the expenses while the labor accomplished will be less; and while some sections will receive too much attention, others will be comparatively neglected.

I need not say what a blessing such a work will prove to the Associations themselves. It is well known that many of these societies are now languishing for the want of means to meet their current expenses; and it might reasonably be asked, seemingly, how can they, then, undertake a new and extensive work like this? The answer is, they can readily collect money for this special army mission, when they can not for any thing else. The community is so sensitively alive to the wants of the soldiers—nearly every city, town, village or family having their own citizens and members in the army—that the subject takes immediate hold of their sympathies, and will command their ready aid and support. We have tried it, and found it so.

Having had a personal interview with the President of your Committee, and learned his hearty readiness to co-operate in this work, I visited Boston, and there met with an equally cordial response. That Society will send an able delegate, and our New York Society will select a prominent citizen and member to represent it; and I doubt not, if the time would have admitted, other societies would have promised the same. I therefore leave the matter in your hands, and pray that a Convention of all the Young Men's Christian Associations of the Loyal States may be called at an early day.

With Christian esteem, fraternally yours, VINCENT COLYER,

Chairman Com. on Correspondence with Convention New York Y. M. C. A.

To James Grant, Esq.,

Sec. of the Com. for calling Convention Y. M. C. A. of the U. S., Philadelphia, Pa.

Having been continuously at this centre, with abundant opportunities of observation, and feeling strongly impressed with the necessity of united and energetic action in this great work, I heartily concur in the proposition presented by Brother Colyer with the view of securing such concerted action.

M. H. MILLER,

President Washington City Y. M. Christian Association.

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